

PRESS NOTE

Do Not Fear Social Stigma; Report Cyber Fraud: Cyber Expert API Vaibhav Patil

‘Cyber Security Awareness’ Session Organised at PMRDA under ‘Seva Sankalp Abhiyan’

Pimpri: “In today’s times, educated citizens are among the most frequent victims of cybercrime. Cyber offences occur when individuals fall prey to fraudulent offers or technological deception. Often, citizens are afraid that they may face social embarrassment or defamation, and this fear leads to significant financial losses. However, in today’s modern era of Artificial Intelligence (AI), there is absolutely no need to fear social stigma. No matter how extensive the network of cybercriminals may be, timely reporting of the crime enables the authorities to take action against them. Therefore, do not remain silent or be afraid of cybercriminals if you have been defrauded,” said Vaibhav Patil, Cyber Expert and Assistant Police Inspector at the Cyber Police Station, Pimpri-Chinchwad Police Commissionerate.

To mark the completion of 25 years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s tenure in constitutional office and with the objective of taking public services to ordinary citizens in accordance with the principle of ‘Seva Paramo Dharma’, the State Government is conducting the ‘Seva Sankalp Abhiyan’ across Maharashtra. In addition, the District Information Office is conducting ‘Lok Samvad-2026’ to create awareness among citizens about various government schemes, initiatives and public safety through the Ganesh festival. As part of these initiatives, the programme was jointly organised by the District Information Office and the Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority (PMRDA).

A special guidance session on ‘Cyber Security Awareness’ was held on Thursday (September 17) at 5 p.m. in the Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Auditorium on the sixth floor of PMRDA Headquarters in Akurdi. Vaibhav Patil, Cyber Expert and Assistant Police Inspector at the Cyber Police Station, Pimpri-Chinchwad Police Commissionerate, provided detailed guidance to PMRDA officers and employees.

Assistant Police Inspector Vaibhav Patil said, “Citizens need to remain extremely cautious about investment fraud, threatening calls made in the name of customs or FedEx parcels, and frauds involving electricity bill payments, gift vouchers and reward points. Do not fall prey to messages on WhatsApp in which fraudsters impersonate senior officers or bosses and demand money citing an emergency. Fraud through matrimonial websites is also currently widespread, and no financial trust should be placed in unknown individuals. Citizens should also stay away from fake and unauthorised loan apps. Fraudsters can gain access to mobile phones by persuading users to download applications such as AnyDesk or QuickSupport. Never grant access to your

phone to such unknown applications. Citizens should also never allow cybercriminals to use their bank accounts in exchange for commissions. Otherwise, they may themselves face legal action in such cases.”

He further advised citizens to activate ‘two-step verification’ to secure their social media accounts and remain alert against fake profiles and identity theft. “Do not click on unknown links or install unidentified APK files,” he said. He also urged citizens to use the government’s ‘Sanchar Saathi’ portal to block lost mobile phones and report spam calls.

During the awareness session, a presentation highlighted various tactics used by cybercriminals and explained methods to protect oneself from such fraud. Citizens were also advised to immediately contact the national helpline 1930 or lodge a complaint through cybercrime.gov.in in case of any cyber fraud.

The programme was chaired by Jitendra Kolambe, Chief Accounts and Finance Officer, PMRDA. Deputy Commissioner (Administration) Rajesh Mashere, along with Cyber Expert Police Constables Sameer Ghadge and Shivaji Bansode, were prominently present on the occasion. Information and Public Relations Officer Purushottam Sangle conducted the programme and proposed the vote of thanks.

Purushottam Sangle, Information and Public Relations Officer, PMRDA